

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 921
98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

0673H.05C

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapters 161 and 633, RSMo, by adding thereto two new sections relating to dyslexia.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapters 161 and 633, RSMo, are amended by adding thereto two new sections, to be known as sections 161.1005 and 633.420, to read as follows:

161.1005. 1. By July 1, 2016, the department shall employ a dyslexia therapist, licensed psychometrist, licensed speech-language pathologist, certified academic language therapist, or certified training specialist to serve as the department's dyslexia specialist. Such dyslexia specialist shall have a minimum of three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders.

2. The department shall ensure that the dyslexia specialist has completed training and received certification from a program approved by the legislative task force on dyslexia and is able to provide necessary information and support to school district teachers.

3. The dyslexia specialist shall:

(1) Be highly trained in dyslexia and related disorders, including best practice interventions and treatment models;

(2) Be responsible for the implementation of professional development; and

(3) Serve as the primary source of information and support for districts addressing the needs of students with dyslexia and related disorders.

4. In addition to other duties assigned under subsection 3 of this section, the dyslexia specialist shall also assist the department with developing and administering professional development programs to be made available to school districts no later than the 2016-17 school year. The programs shall focus on educating teachers regarding the

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

20 indicators of dyslexia, the science surrounding teaching a student who is dyslexic, and
21 classroom accommodations necessary for a student with dyslexia.

633.420. 1. For the purposes of this section, the term “dyslexia” means a disorder
2 that is neurological in origin, characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word
3 recognition, and poor spelling and decoding abilities that typically result from a deficit in
4 the phonological component of language, often unexpected in relation to other cognitive
5 abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, and of which secondary
6 consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading
7 experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Nothing
8 in this section shall prohibit a district from assessing students for dyslexia and offering
9 students specialized reading instruction if a determination is made that a student suffers
10 from dyslexia. Unless required by federal law, nothing in this definition shall require a
11 student with dyslexia to be automatically determined eligible as a student with a disability.

12 2. There is hereby created the “Legislative Task Force on Dyslexia”. The joint
13 committee on education shall provide technical and administrative support as required by
14 the task force to fulfill its duties. The task force shall meet at least quarterly and may hold
15 meetings by telephone or video conference. The task force shall advise and make
16 recommendations to the governor, general assembly, and relevant state agencies regarding
17 matters concerning individuals with dyslexia including education and other adult and
18 adolescent services.

19 3. The task force shall be comprised of eighteen members consisting of the
20 following:

21 (1) Four members of the general assembly, with two members from the senate to be
22 appointed by the president pro tem and two members from the house of representatives
23 to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

24 (2) The commissioner of education, or his or her designee;

25 (3) One representative from an institution of higher education located in this state
26 with specialized expertise in dyslexia and reading instruction;

27 (4) A representative from a state teachers association or the Missouri National
28 Education Association;

29 (5) A representative from the International Dyslexia Association of Missouri;

30 (6) A representative from Decoding Dyslexia of Missouri;

31 (7) A representative from the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals;

32 (8) A representative from the Missouri Council of Administrators of Special
33 Education;

34 (9) A professional licensed in the state of Missouri with experience diagnosing
35 dyslexia including, but not limited to, a licensed psychologist, school psychologist, or
36 neuropsychologist;

37 (10) A speech-language pathologist with training and experience in early literacy
38 development and effective research-based intervention techniques for dyslexia, including
39 an Orton-Gillingham remediation program recommended by the Missouri Speech-
40 Language Hearing Association, or a certified academic language therapist recommended
41 by the Academic Language Therapists Association who is a resident of this state;

42 (11) A representative from an independent private provider or nonprofit
43 organization serving individuals with dyslexia;

44 (12) An assistive technology specialist with expertise in accessible print materials
45 and assistive technology used by individuals with dyslexia recommended by the Missouri
46 assistive technology council;

47 (13) One private citizen who has a child who has been diagnosed with dyslexia;

48 (14) One private citizen who has been diagnosed with dyslexia; and

49 (15) A representative of the Missouri State Council of the International Reading
50 Association.

51 4. The members of the task force, other than the members from the general
52 assembly and ex officio members, shall be appointed by the president pro tem of the senate
53 or the speaker of the house of representatives by September 1, 2015, by alternating
54 appointments beginning with the president pro tem of the senate. A chairperson shall be
55 selected by the members of the task force. Any vacancy on the task force shall be filled in
56 the same manner as the original appointment. Members shall serve on the task force
57 without compensation.

58 5. The task force shall make recommendations for a statewide system for
59 identification, intervention, and delivery of supports for students with dyslexia including
60 the development of resource materials and professional development activities. These
61 recommendations shall be included in a report to the governor and legislature and shall
62 include findings and proposed legislation and shall be made available no longer than
63 twelve months from the task force's first meeting.

64 6. The recommendations and resource materials developed by the task force shall:

65 (1) Identify valid and reliable screening and evaluation assessments and protocols
66 that can be used and the appropriate personnel to administer such assessments in order
67 to identify children with dyslexia or the characteristics of dyslexia as part of an ongoing
68 reading progress monitoring system, multi-tiered system of supports, and special education
69 eligibility determinations in schools;

70 **(2) Recommend an evidence-based reading instruction, with consideration of the**
71 **National Reading Panel Report and Orton-Gillingham methodology principles for use in**
72 **all Missouri schools, and intervention system, including a list of effective dyslexia**
73 **intervention programs, to address dyslexia or characteristics of dyslexia for use by schools**
74 **in multi-tiered systems of support and for services as appropriate for special education**
75 **eligible students;**

76 **(3) Develop and implement preservice and inservice professional development**
77 **activities to address dyslexia identification and intervention, including utilization of**
78 **accessible print materials and assistive technology, within degree programs such as**
79 **education, reading, special education, speech-language pathology, and psychology;**

80 **(4) Review teacher certification and professional development requirements as they**
81 **relate to the needs of students with dyslexia;**

82 **(5) Examine the barriers to accurate information on the prevalence of students with**
83 **dyslexia across the state and recommend a process for accurate reporting of demographic**
84 **data; and**

85 **(6) Study and evaluate current practices for diagnosing, treating, and educating**
86 **children in this state and examine how current laws and regulations affect students with**
87 **dyslexia in order to present recommendations to the governor and general assembly.**

88 **7. The task force shall hire or contract for hire specialist services to support the**
89 **work of the task force as necessary with appropriations made by the general assembly for**
90 **that purpose or from other available funding.**

91 **8. The task force authorized under this section shall automatically sunset on August**
92 **31, 2017, unless reauthorized by an act of the general assembly.**

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